

INTERVIEW WITH PAJAZIT NUSHI

Pristina | June 25 and July 31 2013

Duration: 192 minutes

Present:

1. Pajazit Nushi (Speaker)
2. Anita Prapashtica (Interviewer)
3. Donjetë Berisha (Camera)
4. Jung Chao (Camera)
5. Anna Di Lellio

Transcription notation symbols of non-verbal communication:

() - emotional communication

{ } - the speaker explains something using gestures

Other transcription conventions:

[] - addition to the text to facilitate comprehension

Footnotes are editorial additions to provide information on localities, names, or expressions

Anita Prapashtica: Can you tell us something about your childhood?

Pajazit Nushi: Yes, as you know I am Pajazit Nushi, professor of Psychology. I was born almost 81 years ago and from that time I went through different phases of development, and my childhood for sure holds a special place in these phases. I was born in what at the time was Gjakova, which in my understanding of that time, judging that time today, was one of the average places at the Kosovar level, but with a low development level in comparison with other places. I was born in a family of merchants. My parents and my grandparents had been merchants and had come from parts of then Serbia around the year 1780, when the displacement of Albanians occurred. According to my parents' stories, my family was displaced and they had all been killed during the displacement with the exception of a small child who escaped from death. And he was taken in for rearing and care by a wealthy family with the last name Nushi. Otherwise, the real last name of my family is not Nushi, but [it] had been Shyti. But because this child had been raised in the Nushi family, then our last name had also changed into Nushi.

According to my memories, at that time in Gjakova we had only two families that belonged to the authentic Nushi family tree. In other words, we had other families with the Nushi last name in Gjakova and in Kosovo. We even had families of the other religion, of the Catholic faith, with the last name Nushi. These of the Catholic faith had been members of our family, they were considered as such, and they visited us and we visited them, we kept close friendship [with them] from then until today. A large number of members of this family with the last name Nushi live even today in Vranice, the village Vranice, in the Gjakova district. Regardless of religious differences, what is characteristic and has remained in my memory, as a lasting memory, is that we didn't differentiate if they belonged to the Catholic faith or the Islamic faith.

Otherwise, my parents were religious, they belonged to the Muslim religion, were true believers of the preaching of the Prophet Muhamed. They were believers who applied not only the religious rules of Islam, but at the same time they were close friends with the religious leaders of Gjakova. So to speak, in my childhood we had as family visitor, [one of the] most famous imams of Gjakova, as it was, at the time we

called him Fahri Efendia. An expert of the religion, of the Qur'an, director of the *madrasa*¹ in Gjakova, and the one who finished or recited the Qur'an best in Tunisia on the occasion of the accession of the King of Tunisia in 1964, he was distinguished as a great man of religion. My parents kept close ties with these people of faith.

Whereas my mother was a daughter of a well-known *sheh*² in Gjakova, and he was called the *sheh haxhi*,³ *sheh* Musaja, founder of the *Rrufai*⁴ sect in Gjakova and in Albanian [populated] territories in general. Various small *teqqe*⁵ were created by this *Rrufai* sect in Rahovec, Prizren, Shkodra, Elbasan, Durres, and other places. But the founding of this sect is in Gjakova. And my mother was this *sheh*'s daughter, who is the founder of the sect or the order of dervishes called *Rrufai*. Even today this *teqqe* is known and has... enjoys strong authority not only in Kosovo but also in other places, in Kosovo and abroad, outside Kosovo especially in Albania.

My childhood, I can say that it was a childhood, I value it today... a childhood in difficult economic-social and overall political conditions and relations. I was born in the year 1933, when Gjakova and Kosovo were under the Serbian-Croatian-Slovenian Kingdom. At that time, I took my first lessons in the Serbian language. I was in a class that at that time was called a preparatory class, for children for whom Serbian was not their mother tongue, the purpose of which was to prepare these children to follow studies in the Serbian language.

However, this was the year 1939, when I was only six years old, immediately in the year 1940 began the unrests in association with the beginning of the Second World War. And in this case, Gjakova and a part of Kosovo were incorporated into the so-called Albanian Kingdom under the reign of the King of Italy, Ethiopia and Albania, Prince Emmanuel III he was called, and I remember clearly the statues of this King in the classrooms where we were taught.

It was a time which today I value, a time of great efforts by Albanians, especially from Gjakova, but also from Kosovo, for the unification with Albania and these political changes greatly suited the Albanians of that time. We expected much in other words, my parents also expected much from this unification, because my father was a great admirer of King Zog, of King Ahmed Zog - regardless of the fact that he lived in Kosovo at the time, in the former Serbian-Croatian-Slovenian Kingdom respectively, he followed with much more attention developments in Albania than he followed developments in Kosovo and in Gjakova.

¹*Madrasa* is a Muslim religious school, the only school in Kosovo where teaching could be conducted in Albanian until 1945.

²*Sheh* is the religious leader of a Sufi sect.

³*Haxhi* is the Albanian rendition of *Hadji*, the title given to one who has made the greater pilgrimage to Mecca.

⁴*Rrufai* or *Rifai'i*, a Sufi brotherhood founded in the 12th century near Basra in today Iraq.

⁵*Teqqe* in Albanian, *tekke* in Turkish, is a lodge of a Sufi order, in this case the Bektashi. It is inhabited by a Cheikh or Baba and by dervishes.

Whereas my mother was... I speak about that time, she had her brother, also a great religious man, called *sheh* Adem, founder of a few *teqqe* in Albania, at first in Shkodra, then in Elbasan, then in Peqin, and from there he went and settled in Gri, a village near the Albanian border, say, about seven-nine kilometers beyond the Serbian-Croatian and Albanian Kingdom border at the time. And as a child, I spent three days, a week, a few times in Albania with my mother, in the village of Gri, where her brother had settled with his own family of course, and with his religious institution.

I began my primary education in the presence of my five sisters, I was born after five sisters. And all of them, especially my second sister who is still alive, she was an excellent student of the then Serbian elementary school of Gjakova. And from her I learned how I should make efforts to master the other language, to master subjects and lessons in elementary school, etc., etc. During all this time, not to take anything away from the common denominator, the religious and moral education was the dominant education in our family and in our family environment, the environment of the two families. I call it the environment of the two families because two brothers, my father and my uncle, lived in houses on the same street, separated one from the other, but on the same street. And differently from my family, which was economically poorer, not to say poor, my uncle was a wealthy man. I don't know how to explain the complete origin of these changes, but it is true that we, in our family, including me and others, lived in what were then relatively poor economic conditions.

I can say that my elementary education in the Albanian language was completed and organized by teachers mainly arrived from Albania. My first teachers were three teachers from Shkodra, one woman teacher from Elbasan. And at the time, we were educated and taught under the education system that the Albanian Kingdom had at the time, under which we too lived.

For example, I remember as a child I was a second grade student in the *Bajram Curri* elementary school in Gjakova, when we welcomed the Prime Minister of Albania Mustafa Kruja for the first time. As children we were dressed in black shorts and red shirts. Ever since, it is not clear to me how I happened to be in the row of those children who requested from the Prime Minister not to establish the Trade Institute in Gjakova, as the government of Mehmet Kruja had decided, but to establish a *Shkolla Normale*.⁶ This was a request of this environment where I happened to be as well. But I can't say whether I was there by coincidence, or if we were swept in somehow, and I happened to be there, this I don't understand, neither can I talk about it.

But I know a man, he is a close friend, Vehap Shita, you will speak to him, he was the one who requested to change the decision of the Albanian government of the time, that, I don't know why, had made the decision to establish the Trade Institute in Gjakova, that poor place, a place where at that time there were a few tailors, a few shoemakers, a few blacksmiths, the majority were farmers, when everything else was

⁶ The *Shkolla Normale* opened in Gjakova in 1948 to train the teachers needed for the newly opened schools. With the exception of a brief interlude during the Italian Fascist occupation of Kosovo during WWII, these were the first schools in Albanian language that Kosovo ever had. In 1953, the *Shkolla Normale* moved to Pristina.

more developed, while trade was not developed because there was no one to develop trade. And surprisingly, that request was then implemented.

And in Gjakova, instead of establishing the Trade Institute, the *Shkolla Normale* was established, where taught... Its first director was Zekeria Rexha, a professor of philosophy who taught me later of course, but I remember him very well. In other words, the educational staff were mostly teachers, with the exception of this director who was a professor who hadn't graduated as a professor in Paris, but had completed basic philosophy studies in Paris and graduated in Belgrade a long time after the time that I am talking about. However, he was a person with great authority then, a highly educated man like nobody else at the time in either Gjakova or Kosovo. Later, he was also a political personality, he took part in the Conference of Bujan, where for the first time it was decided that Albanians from Kosovo wish to unite with Albania. In the years 1942 and 1943, on December 31, 1942 and January 1-2 1943, the conference of Bujan was held, about which Vehap Shita can speak to you more than I can, since I know about it theoretically, while he was involved in practice back then.

Even as a child I was a supporter of the national antifascist liberation movement. I took part in the protests of November 28, 1942. As a nine-year old child, ten years old to be more precise, I delivered conspiracy material, written material of the antifascist movement from a family to my family and mainly from my teachers to my uncle who was a cleric, he was a *sheh* in the *Rrufai teqqe*, but a supporter of the antifascist national liberation movement. Our teachers at that time, maybe I am being repetitive, had not arrived only from Albania but were teachers trained at the same school, in the *Shkolla Normale* of Elbasan, the only Albanian school to create educational staff in the Albanian language. And all of them without exception were great patriots, they educated us in the strong patriotic spirit of the time. Otherwise, my childhood or the childhood of my peers wouldn't have been known, I wouldn't say this if it were not the truth, a great truth.

In music lessons, the songs were patriotic songs, the drawing class was related to patriotism, how to draw the flag with an eagle. The main subject was the subject of history, we didn't have books but were taught history in the spirit of the development of the history of the Albanian nation. I can explain that my positive political attitude, later and throughout my entire life, when I was engaged in political functions - from the poor Gjakova municipality to the more developed circuit of the Prizren district, the political engagement in functions on a Kosovo level and on the level of the Yugoslav Federation - was born from all this.

During this time, I am speaking about the time of my childhood, and as I told you it is a time that I remember from '38, '39, until '44, '45 when I completed the fifth grade of elementary school, this I call my childhood. I completed the fifth grade of elementary school in 1945, on the verge of end of the Second World War. It was one of the hardest exams I passed during the entire period of my education and even my doctorate studies. We had an examination commission created by the Ministry of the Albanian Kingdom, the chairman was from Tirana. All the teachers were lined up, and we had a written exam, an essay in Albanian language and the subject of arithmetic as we called it at that time. Those who passed these two subjects in writing had the right to take the oral exam.

We took the exam in the Albanian language in spelling, dictation, essay, phonetics and syntax, we also took the arithmetic exam orally. Later, in the coming days, we were subjected to the exam in social sciences and natural sciences, this is how they were called. And at the end, we had a group of subjects that were called skills, and that consisted of handwriting, music, drawing and crafts, this is what the school subjects were then.

As for music, I talked a bit about it, but what is most important, and I didn't say it, is this: from that time, my desire, the inclination to be involved with music was born, and I spent all that time of my life as an instrumentalist and a good singer. Even when I wasn't able or I didn't have the voice to sing, I am pleased with my participation in musical concerts, in artistic concerts of various levels, but most importantly, not only of folk music but also refined folk music, artistic music etc., etc. Even today I am... among all the fields of my involvement, I never parted from music and always leaned towards music creation. As far as I understand it, it is a product, like a product of my family and my uncle, who made music, how to say it, in religious terms. But they used instruments, even then they used a mandolin, I am speaking about 1942, '43, '43, when there could have been mandolins only in four-five wealthy families in Gjakova.

I would conclude all these [stories] with one reminiscing sentence, as far as my childhood is concerned. From this childhood I had benefits, I realize now that I had many great benefits. The Albanian language that I learned at the time, served me as a basis for later studies, because later I learned in Serbian, later I came to write much better, with fewer mistakes in Serbian than in Albanian, because the influence of language, the fluency in two languages, was strong. And studying in school in the Serbian language did not acknowledge any Albanian phonetics, or morphology or syntax, because that was a Slavic language with an overall different structure, but I built the foundations of the Albanian language, of national history, of geography and social sciences in general since the beginning of elementary school, since my childhood.

Since then, I was a musician, as a child I played the guitar, I played the mandolin as my profession...my instrument was the mandolin, that is what we had. My father had an opportunity to provide the mandolin, actually my uncle donated it to me. Even if I had known another instrument, we didn't have any then, for example the first time I learned what a piano was, what a *klaviri* [Serbian for piano] was, when I visited the church in Deçan. I saw that someone played an instrument and I was surprised like a child, I saw that there exists this kind of instrument that fills the whole church of Deçan, the whole of Deçan monastery, with sound.

I have one objection about the education system of that time, they did not teach us to speak foreign languages. Foreign languages are learned in childhood, it is hard to learn foreign languages later. We did not have foreign language then, we learned Serbian spontaneously because we had friends, we had family, we had acquaintances from Serbian families and they learned Albanian from us, but to learn French, to learn Italian, because Italians were the occupiers then, to learn German, in that educational system was not possible. Time after time some Italian teachers came to teach us Italian. When the Italians left, they began to teach us German, but there was no consistent learning of foreign languages during my

childhood [for] my generation, including me. This is one of the biggest shortcomings of the period, one that I can't justify. I can't justify it, because there were teachers and we had the opportunity to master one of the foreign languages, since the Italian occupiers conducted trade only in Italian and not in other languages. Italians didn't know Albanian, Germans spoke the German language but not Albanian, they did not speak Albanian. Despite this, I am speaking about myself, it remains the complaint that during my childhood I did not have the opportunity to learn a foreign language and go to university with a basic knowledge of French, Italian, German, of I don't know what, even Turkish.

Those who attended the *madrassa*, for example a few of my friends in Gjakova, were able to learn Arabic. The *madrassa* was divided by a wall from my family, from my house. I did not attend classes at the religious *madrassa*, I attended studies at a public school, part of the public elementary education. I also remember that many people who didn't know the Albanian language, who were adults, mature, young men, came to study at the school where I studied the Albanian alphabet in the evenings. [They would come] to learn how to write and read in the Albanian language, because they had only studied in Arabic, more [had studied] in the Slavic language, in the Serbian language.

What is most characteristic of my childhood is that particularly in my class, we were mostly male. There were a few female students, and those who were there sat in a completely separate row of desks. It was known which was the female row, and we did not communicate with that row and they did not communicate with us, this was the rule. When it was time to go inside, we entered the classroom, the bell was rung, a *komon*,⁷ by the janitor, the school's service man, it would notify us that we needed to line up. We would line up, the first two-three rows of two-three people were female students, the rest were males, we always lined up behind them and were separate from them. This was the system of the time, even when we went to day trips, since we didn't have excursions back then. The female students would sometimes come, sometimes they would not, most of them didn't. Even those who came were completely separated from us, they communicated among themselves, and we among ourselves. This is how life was at the time, and for my generation overall.

And another characteristic, among the study subjects we also had faith as a subject, religious study. We Muslims were taught by an imam, and those who were Catholics were taught by the priest. We had religion instructions and ethics class, that is how it was called, two hours every week, a regular class in the elementary education system. We did not have books for religious studies, even other books were rare but we each had a geography book. We had a book for nature study but for other subjects we didn't have books, mainly we took notes or teachers dictated to us. For religious studies we had a special magazine, we and the Catholics as well, the magazine was published in Tirana and contained religious teachings that we had to memorize. We could learn ablution, how to pray, and complete other sermons. My Catholic friends also studied from their books in the Albanian language, as I remember. Unlike ours, those books for Muslims which were published in Tirana, these books were published in Shkodra...

⁷ "Komon" is a type of bell that was hung on the neck of a cow.

In the meantime, my sisters had gotten married, while I was still a child. But they got married in the customary fashion of that time, through an arrangement, they married mainly into families that were relatively wealthier than us. My older sister for example was married to a man who already had a wife but didn't have children. The family of my sister's husband was a wealthy family, a merchant family and I am sure that wealth was passed on through this relationship and my 21 year old sister was married to a 49 year old, from what I remember. Her fate was such that children were born. Now, some of her children also died, but a very big family was created.

For example, one of her children is a well-known professor of mathematics in the University of Pristina, he is a doctor of science in mathematics, his name is Minir Efendi. Another one was a well-known economist who was killed later during the war. It is neither known who killed him or why was he killed, nor why he disappeared, but I want to tell their fate.

My second sister, who was known as an excellent student but also very skilled, I can now say, she had a higher intellectual power than all of us, including my parents. For example, she knew how to trade with men and women and provide for the family. She is alive today, almost 90 years old, she is quite old but her memory is well preserved. She had a family as well, she has granddaughters, grandsons, great-grandchildren, and so on, and so on. I have to share one more thing and with this I will close this period. Surprisingly, my sisters, who were part of a distinguished sect, the *Rrufai* sect, had gotten married: the oldest one married into a family of imams that didn't permit sects; the second one in a family of the same sect as my father and my mother; the third one was married into another sect, the *Kadri*⁸ sect; the fourth one is still alive, she was married into a family of the *Bektashi* sect. However, even today I can proudly say there was a tight relationship, and the difference of confessions in different sects was not visible. We had a great relationship with all these families and their extended families that belonged to other various sects. This is how I conclude with this period.

Anita Prapashtica: Professor, you told us about elementary school, can you tell us something about high school?

Pajazit Nushi: After the completion of the fifth grade of elementary school, we took some kind of exam that was called [inc.] exam, an exam in front of a very important commission. And the person who passed was not obliged to go to school later, but as soon as this exam ended, the Second World War ended, and a new system of education came into force, a system that was called the system of the pre-gymnasium⁹ and the gymnasium. I registered in the second grade of the gymnasium then, because they recognized the fifth grade as the first grade of gymnasium, right away I continue studies in the second grade of the gymnasium.

⁸*Kadiri tarika or tariqah* is one of the largest Sufi schools or orders. It was founded by Hazrat Sheikh Abd al-Qadir al-Gillani, a holy man from Baghdad.

⁹ A European type of secondary school with emphasis on academic learning, different from vocational schools because it prepares students for university.

There, I encountered another generation that finished before me... that had just finished the first grade of the gymnasium. They had a special class that was called class A, 2A, we were 2B, we had a close relationship but the age difference was great, for example between me who was twelve years old in the second year of the gymnasium, and the students in class 2A who were 18, 19. These were the consequences of various wars and different individual wishes of people and people's destinies. I didn't have an educated family, but I completed elementary school, I continued right away ... they recognized my fifth grade as a first year of the gymnasium. I passed the second grade, third grade, fourth grade, but what I forgot to tell you is that since childhood I was an excellent student, with excellent final grades. And the excellent completion of the fifth grade was easily accepted as the first grade of gymnasium. In the second grade too, I completed the second year with excellent results, as well as the third and fourth year.

I finished the fourth year of the gymnasium in 1948, when the education system then had an organized system of the semi-*Matura* exam,¹⁰ the half *Matura* exam. As an excellent student, I was exempted from taking the semi-*Matura* exam, I did not take it. But again, as an excellent student, I had another special benefit, because right away I went to the third grade of *Shkolla Normale*, [I skipped] two years, as an excellent student. I completed the third and fourth year of *Normale* as an excellent student as well, and as such then I was chosen by a special Kosovo commission to go and study Pedagogy.

I did not accept to go study Pedagogy, I stubbornly requested to enroll in psychology studies, and I made it. But this change of subjects resulted in the inability of the state to give me a scholarship for psychology, for pedagogy yes, for psychology no. My parents and relatives supported me during the first and second year of experimental psychology at the University of Belgrade. I was fortunate to be part of a generation, the first generation of psychology students at the University of Belgrade after the end of the Second World War, but most of them were locals, they were residents of Belgrade who had not only completed the university, not only high school with very high results, but they came from families where education was in their tradition. For example, my best Serbian friend was Radonić, his father had been a general during old Serbia's time, but an educated general. He spoke foreign languages, French, Spanish, beautifully, but I did not speak any foreign language. This excellent environment of Belgrade students helped me a lot at the time.

Anita Prapashtica: How did they welcome you when you went there, as a Kosovar, as an Albanian?

Pajazit Nushi: Yes, I had a special impression that they did not differentiate me much from the others, on the other hand, I can say that I was not a retiring type, one who liked isolation either, but I willingly sought to socialize with friends. I had one, I told you, a close friend, his father was a general, later he became a doctor of psychology, he stayed at the psychology department in Belgrade, and retired as a tenured Professor at the University of Belgrade. Another girl, for example, her name was Lidia Vučić, her mother was a doctor of psychology, her father also a doctor of psychology, this is what the environment was like

¹⁰ Set of examinations formerly given to students after the fourth year of secondary school.

then. Overall, from what I remember, we were 24-25 people registered, but only 17-18 were attending classes regularly, and I was among those who attended classes regularly.

In the first and second year, I passed the exams with lower marks, my highest mark was an Eight [Ten the highest grade]. Other grades were...I had only one Eight, two Sevens, and four Sixes, this was the level [I was at]. It wasn't only a question of language, language definitely, but it was also a question of being prepared. In short, in the first year we had some of the disciplines in the natural sciences that in high school I hadn't covered at that level. We had physics, optics, acoustics, thermodynamics, an exam by a very well known physics professor at the University of Belgrade. With great difficulty, I was able to study and pass the subject with a Six. We had biology, Darwinism, I managed to master these subjects with great difficulty. We had physiology, anatomy and physiology, especially physiology of the nervous system and the endocrinology system, of endocrine glands and senses, the system of senses. I also had difficulties learning this subject properly, meanwhile in other subjects I had higher marks. For example, I don't want to brag about it, but in the pre-military class I had very high mark, however... do you know how to handle a gun? Do you know how to fix a gun? etc. etc., those were not very difficult subjects.

Even though I wanted, and I tried very hard in history, philosophy, I passed the exams in the first round, but not with marks higher than Six. In logic, I had a very high mark, I had a Nine in logic, and I don't know why they did not give me Ten. I am not sure why even today, as I knew the subject better than what the professor lectured, even today I know logic very well. But regardless of that, I want to tell you that my preparation was not at the same level of the preparation of my colleagues who were from Belgrade, and from known families with a tradition of education. I wasn't at that level, I was at a level below and while they made less effort to study the subjects and got higher marks, I tried very hard and would get a Six or a Seven with great difficulty, this is how it was.

My high school education was practically very short, because before the *Matura*, five months before the *Matura*, they put us on duty. I was forced to become a teacher in the village of Deçan, in the elementary school of Deçan. And when I went there with a *Matura*, I was forced to become the director of the pre-gymnasium, and to teach not as a teacher, but as a professor of the lower gymnasium at the time, in the first and second grades of the gymnasium. I taught the Albanian language, history, and music and the others taught other subjects. Right after the end of the 1949 school year, I had to take the exams of the *Matura* of the *Shkolla Normale*, exams that I completed very successfully. I also have the diploma with the same success. And thanks to this success, it was determined, as I already said in the beginning, that I study pedagogy, but I did not accept to study pedagogy, I asked to study psychology.

I didn't know that I would have great difficulties in mastering those subjects for which I didn't have enough preparation, I mentioned physics to you, I mentioned anatomy and physiology, I mentioned Darwinism and evolution and biology etc., etc., my high-school life was very limited, because all that I remember during that time are these things I said to you ... with a special addition that anywhere I went, I had a mandolin with me. I never gave up on music, I spent the highschool [period], in Deçan, the village of Irusniq, left to myself, with a mandolin (smiles), playing loudly and causing an uproar, as our people

say, and I completed high school but at the same time I read a lot. I read a lot, for example, the books or novels that we had in Albanian language then: *Anna Karenina*, for example, *The Mother* by Maxim Gorki.

Ernest Koliqi had translated great Italian poets. I knew them very well from the literature that got to us, that we Albanians in general had, but also we in Kosovo, though particularly those from Albania were more advanced in education and culture, they were more connected more with the Italian systems of education, culture, and sciences. Our side, for example, the Northern parts, we were under the influence of the Slavic system, under the influence of the Serbian system. But during that time, I am speaking about the years of the Second World War, the free communication system with Italy reached quite deeply into Kosovo. This view [was found] in all novels and in all translations that were completed, they were translations by Albanians who lived and were educated in Italy, and who at the same time translated from Italian to Albanian.

Also, during this time even Albanian writers, however many they were, Naim Frashëri, Sami Frashëri, Ndre Mjeda, Ernest Koliqi, Migjeni etc. had reached Kosovo at the time, we didn't have them before. I heard of Migjeni only when I was in fourth grade. In Albania they heard [about him] much earlier, or about the novel *Mother* by Dea Nica, I heard about it much later, that novel was already very well known in Italy, students in elementary school knew about it. I read it when I was almost a teenager, because we did not have the opportunity to encounter literature from abroad.

All of this was not without essential influence on the development of my personality and traits of my personality. Therefore these traits of my personality... I think that the family upbringing was relatively imbued with religion, and this had been very strict, for example during childhood and youth. When the *hoxha* sang the evening prayer, someone from the family had to place the stick to lock the door, communication with the outside world ceased till the next morning, this is how it was then. (Smiles) Today it is different, but when I tell my children...when I tell them, these [things] are unbelievable.

As a child, I participated in religious prayers at the mosque, at the *teqqe*, with my parents. I also went to church with my Catholic friends as an observer. Surprisingly, my closest friendships even in childhood, even in youth, even now, are with Catholics. I am not sure how it came to this, but I am explaining that I have been in continuous contact with them, and because being a taker by nature... this contact fostered closeness and a greater love towards them. For example here now I have a close friend, Engjell Berisha, he is a musician, he is Catholic. I knew him probably from *Normale*. My daughter's godfather, who cut the girl's hair, was Mark Kaqinari, a Catholic. I could have found one hundred or one thousand Muslims, but I trusted a man with special human traits and not religious traits.

Therefore I think that there is a real solidarity and religious tolerance in our society that are not present in other societies at the same level, and they are also present in me. For example, I was at a conference on blood feuds reconciliation in Tirana when a youngster approached me, "I am part of your family because my last name is also Nushi." "Where are you from?" "From Mirdita." "What is your father's name?" "Nikola." Catholic! But on the other hand, I also had some difficulties later when I was part of the political life around the 60s, 70s, when the relations with Albania were severely interrupted. There, they had high

political officials with the last name Nushi. The President of the Presidency of the Albanian Parliament had the last name Nushi, a Catholic. I didn't know him then or now, he is deceased, we didn't know each other. However, here they were asking what family relations do I have with this man. There was one person by the last name Nushi among the well-known diplomats in the Enver Hoxha's regime, he was an Orthodox from Southern Albania. I never saw him, nor did he ever see me, but here they were asking what relation, what roots did I and this known, former diplomat have [in common]. And I repeat, even now, I didn't know him. I asked and they told me, "He died a long time ago."

In other words, this last name has served me (smiles) mostly positively, sometimes negatively, but it didn't cause me any harm. I never felt the need to change my last name, not only that, but also my spouse's maiden name is Nushi, my spouse {points to himself}, because we don't have family relations with her. As I said, the real last name of my family had been Shyti, not Nushi, and the real last name Nushi, the original last name, belongs to my wife's uncle, therefore she didn't have to change her last name, neither I had to change my last name, we have the same last name (smiles)

Anita Prapashtica: Tell us something about your family.

Pajazit Nushi: Yes. Before I was born, of course, the family had been large and it seems it was relatively wealthy. My father, or better said, when my father was young and a bachelor, one of the wives of the brother that had died had been brought back [to the house]. He died, and according to traditions at the time, she was returned to my father.¹¹ But she came to my father's house with a Xheladin Nushi. I don't know him, understandably I wasn't even born then, he had been educated, and he continued his studies. At one point, they left and settled in Tirana, she and Xheladin Nushi. I have the impression that they separated because of a disagreement regarding her marriage to my father, since [the son] was an adult. That is my impression, but I don't know, I didn't live through those times. I've heard from my mother that this could be one of the reasons why they left, and they settled in Tirana.

He continued his studies. He finished his studies at the faculty of economics in Graz, he quickly got a doctorate in economic sciences. He returned as an advisor in Ahmet Zog's royal court. In the meantime, he married a girl from Vienna. She moved to Tirana, she then taught in the school *Nana Mretreshë* [Queen Mother], this is how it was called back then, otherwise a popular school, I heard about this school later. They had a child, a girl, she is still alive, her name was Shpresa.

In the meantime, because she had to flee from Enver Hoxha's regime, the mother, along with the guy who was in Vienna, they changed their name and last name to be able to support themselves in Vienna. In this view she... Today her name is an Italian name, but honestly, I can't remember it. Her real name, even she says, "I am Shpresa," but her last name naturally, she was obliged to change it when she got married. I looked for her in the '70s in Vienna, with the help of the Yugoslav Embassy, but I searched the last name

¹¹ Traditionally, widows were married to their brothers-in-law in order to remain in the family. This seems to be the case with Pajazit Nushi's father and his first wife.

Nushi, Shpresa Nushi. When I traveled to Vienna with the Yugoslav delegation for a week-long UNESCO meeting, the Yugoslav Embassy told me, “There is no Nushi family in Vienna.”

Since then, I gave up. One day, unexpectedly, at home, I think it was 1999, a friend of mine from Vienna called me on the phone. “Hey” he says, “I have a woman here called Shpresa Nushi, she says her name is Shpresa, last name Nushi. And she wants to know what Nushi are you, from which Nushi are you and which Nushi is she from.” I said, “Yes, I know her, she doesn’t know me, she is from our family.” I told her about her origins, we reconnected and continue to do so, she visited me a few times. The last time she came for a visit was three-four months ago. Of course we communicate, not every night, but maybe once a week or through emails, through phones, etc. etc.

She has two girls and a boy, of course she has become a grandmother, she is old. She was a Professor of English Language at the University of Vienna, she retired from this university. And in this matter, I had some political obstacles here. I did not dare mention the name of Xheladin Nushi here. I didn’t dare, because he was, or had been, Zogist and a sworn anti-Communist. He pursued Communists, he pursued Fadil Hoxha¹² and Xhavit Nimani,¹³ high-ranking leaders of the Communist Party in Kosovo. While they were students in the *Shkolla Normale*, they were suspended because they were Communists. And these [ones] here, Fadil Hoxha, tried to get information about my relation to Xheladin Nushi, and I told him that he wasn’t anything to me, I don’t know him and we are not related anyhow. He said, “The only person who pursued us, was Xheladin Nushi.” And his daughter said to me that Enver Hoxha tried everything to bring him, and of course his people as well, to take Xheladin Nushi from the King’s court to Tirana. But he had replied to Enver Hoxha, “Until you have connections with the Soviets, I will not set foot in Albania.” He did not return to Albania, otherwise whoever returned was executed, killed etc. etc. But he also wasn’t very fortunate with the royal court, I think he disagreed and argued with the royal court in London.

The royal court, Ahmet Zog’s five daughters, Ahmet Zog with his children, with his family and his entourage, moved from London to Cairo, in Egypt. He [Xheladin] did not agree to go to Egypt, he stayed in London. He died unexpectedly of a heart attack, and his eulogy was held by one of the important intellectuals then, an Albanian. His daughter told me that on his tomb [there is a writing that] says something like, “Lucky is the one who dies honorably like Xheladin Nushi,” in Albanian on one side, and in English on the other. I researched this, I wrote about this, I compiled materials about this man. I saw that he had been a distinguished man, I saw that he had also been a smart man.

I also noticed that he had been an anti-Communist, I also noticed that he had been a great Zogist, he trusted Zog a lot. However, surprisingly, in my efforts to find material straight from the royal court and

¹² Fadil Hoxha (1916-2001), Albanian Communist and partisan leader from Gjakova, who held a number of high posts in Kosovo and Yugoslavia, including the rotating post of Vice President of the Federal Presidency, the highest leadership post in Yugoslavia under Tito, in 1978-79. He retired in 1986, but was expelled from the League of Communist on charges of nationalism.

¹³ Xhavit Nimani (1919-2000), Albanian Communist and partisan leader, who held a number of high posts in Kosovo and Yugoslavia, was the first President of the Presidency of Kosovo.

from the talks I had with Leka, the one who died, Ahmet Zog's son, and with others, they refuse to give me any straightforward information. The information I have, I have from his friends or from various readings and different documents.

It seems that disagreements between him and the royal court were so strong that they...I have been promised that documents may be found after Ahmet Zog's archives arrive from South Africa. But I don't believe that they will give away those documents, I am in search of all documents to be able to know him as much as possible, I want to throw some light on his persona, his persona according to documents, not as I would like it to be. Because I didn't have any contact, even if I wanted to, I couldn't have had it with him, did not have contact with him, this is what...

As it is known, when I was determined to study psychology, and I completed this field, the field of psychology, in the department of the then Philosophy Faculty of the University of Belgrade, from 1950 until 1954, so in a narrow sense my profession is Professor of Psychology. I did not come into this profession accidentally, but since high school I showed a certain special interest in the investigation of human spiritual development, as well as the possibility to know about psychological processes and about human behavior in general.

Supposing that with this knowledge I could organize useful activities for the development of the Kosovo society at the time. That period, it was the beginning of the years of the second half of the twentieth century, when Kosovo was struggling with the eradication of illiteracy, as well as with the need to open the education network of elementary education, of high school education. Back then, we did not have any concept of higher education and university education in Kosovo, that concept was born later.

After I finished my studies, I did military service in the former Yugoslav army. I was a private in the artillery unit of the former Yugoslav army, I completed this service with distinction, I got special acknowledgments. I don't have any military rank. So after the military service, I did not have an opportunity to be involved in any defense unit, an army unit, or a civilian defense unit, etc. etc. In other words, at the end of military service, I discontinued for good my involvement in civil or military defense etc., etc.

I began my profession as a professor of psychology at the former Gjakova high school, but I became well known as a psychologist [sic] of psychology in the then *Shkolla Normale*, where psychology was the main subject among the most important subjects for the development of a teacher's required profile, particularly that of the high school teacher. I worked five years in the *Shkolla Normale* in Prizren, then called *Shkolla Normale* Dimitrie Tucović, to go on later to *Shkolla Normale* Miladin Popović in Pristina, in which school I spent five full years. The last two years I was also the Deputy Director of the *Shkolla Normale* Miladin Popović.

From this post I was selected as a Director of Kosovo's Bureau for the Improvement of Schools. I was in this post for less than two full years because I was the candidate from Kosovo, and was selected by the

Executive Federation Council of former Yugoslavia as an assistant to the Chairman for Education and Culture, which translated into our current language means Deputy to the Minister of Education and Culture in Yugoslavia. Here I completed a term for four years and a few months, that is how long we were mandated for. This service was during my life in Belgrade of course. I had my family with me as well, the children, the spouse and my mother in Belgrade. So that Belgrade, for me, including the years of studying and the years of actively working, marks almost a quarter of my life spent in the environment of Belgrade. I had many friends, mainly from the professional circle, but I can say that circle of friends and women friends was very serious, and I never felt inferior in that circle where I spent time, because that circle did not give me a reason to feel that way.

I was relatively successful in my work. I always received plaudits for my professional activities and for what I achieved the most, the position of Deputy of the Council for Education and Culture of Yugoslavia [and for what] is my professional commitment to the transformation of elementary education in Yugoslavia. Until then, the elementary education was different according to the republics, somewhere it lasted four years, somewhere six, somewhere five, and after the establishment of the main concept of elementary education at a Yugoslav level, it was decided that the elementary education was to be eight years long. It was a unified standard for the developed countries in Yugoslavia, for example Slovenia and Croatia, which were far ahead of Kosovo, and for Kosovo, that was far behind in the economic, political, social and cultural development. The mandatory education in the education system of Yugoslavia at the time was eight years. After the eight-year education, the classes that successfully completed the elementary education continued their studies in various schools and levels of high school. The greatest interest was understandably for the gymnasium and less determined was the interest for professional schools of various kinds, for example, the professional schools for technical professions, for medical professions. The art schools were seen differently, because the students who were accepted and studied there had an affinity, whether for music, sculpture or painting etc., etc.

I can also say that we had few specific professional schools at the time, for example the math gymnasium, this we had organized even in Kosovo for those who had talent, had an affinity for math. And I think that these generations that came out from this gymnasium were successful mathematicians later, they got the position of professors in various faculties and in institutions where high knowledge of math was required. At the same time, when I was the director of The Bureau for the Improvement of Schools, I was accepted as a psychology lecturer in the pedagogical high school of Pristina. They made it possible for me to teach classes outside of the regular class hours. In other words, I held these hours outside of the eight work hours I completed at the office. Later, I was accepted as psychology lecturer in the Philosophy Faculty of the University of Pristina. I did not give up my profession as a professor of psychology, whether [teaching] in the high school, or at the university, even when I worked in Belgrade, even when I worked in administrative bodies such as the Yugoslav Federation Executive Council. I traveled from Belgrade every week to be able to teach psychology classes, on Saturdays and Sundays, particularly on weekends, which were rest days for us.

This helped me a lot, because later I was forced to leave political institutions because in 1981, when I was the Vice President of the Executive Council of Kosovo, actually the Vice President of the Executive [branch] of Kosovo, the demonstrations of the Kosovar students broke out. The demonstrations that ... I tried to protect those who participated in demonstrations at the extended meeting of the Committee of the League of Communists with some arguments that I asked to be considered when they evaluated the nature of these demonstrations. Not only did I not find support from those who knew me well, but the majority of them criticized me harshly and attacked me harshly and forced me to resign from the position of Vice President of the Kosovo Executive.

The main reason that I wasn't taken into consideration by those who did not support me was that at the Executive Council I was not only responsible for the expansion of education, culture, science, physical education, health in Kosovo, but the scope of my work covered also Kosovo's international relations with other countries, particularly then we had international relations mainly with Albania, with the Republic of Albania, relations that were defined in special agreements among institutions but not among governments.

For example, we had a memorandum of cooperation between the University of Pristina and the Tirana State University, which was renewed every two years. We had a memorandum of cooperation between the Academy of Science and Art of Kosovo and the Academy of Science of Albania, which as I remember was renewed every two years. But other than these, other cultural and informative institutions, for example the National Theater, also had these memoranda of cooperation. Pristina's Regional Theater had a collaboration also with the Theater of Tirana, The National Theater of Albania. Prishtina Television had a collaboration with Television of Tirana. All of these, or for all of these, we were responsible, the Executive Council. And the main person responsible for these was I, because this issue was within the scope of my activities, as I told you.

After all the big turbulences that Kosovo was going through at the time, and after false information, not to say that information was fabricated, but some was fabricated, I lived with some kind of punishment that you could call house arrest. I was told that it was better by the leadership of Kosovo of the time, the President of the Presidency of Kosovo told me it was better if I didn't go out and if I did, to go out at night if possible. Even at the university, they did not interrupt my work, but they stipulated that I teach only at night. So, I planned the teaching, the exercises, my empirical research, in the late evening hours of the turbulent years of the early '80s, '90s. As for psychology, in other words my profession, I have to emphasize, I never withdrew. I wrote scientific papers, scientific commentaries, articles, critiques, reviews, but mainly things that had to do with issues of psychology.

I had other positions as well, for example one of the positions where I was hit the hardest after the year 1981, was organizing the 100th anniversary of the Albanian League of Prizren. I was the chairman of the planning council, of this council. I think that we marked the one hundred year anniversary in Kosovo then with a very rich program. This rich program included an International Conference about the Albanian

League of Prizren, which we organized for a week here in Pristina. It included the opening of the Memorial Center of the Albanian League of Prizren. It exists even today and dates from this time. Within the Center, we unveiled statues of the leaders of the Albanian League of Prizren, first of all Abdyl Frashëri, since he was the most important, as he was the first President of the first government of the League of Prizren at the time, and the Minister of Defense and Finance Sylejman Vokshi as well.

They were given... the research and vast information on the role of the Albanian League were given much [space] proportionally also in the everyday press of Kosovo, and in the Kosovo magazines as well. Those years were the years when the Albanian League of Prizren dominated. For those who don't know, [the League] aimed to expel the Ottoman invaders and defend the ethnic Albanian borders. The protection of ethnic Albanian borders was first of all not in agreement with the documents of the Serbian leadership, [the leadership of] not only Serbia and of Macedonia, but also that of Montenegro. Because of this reason, we found ourselves in an inexplicable trap. Even in contemporary terms, I was neutral at the time, my goal was to present the truth about the Albanian League of Kosovo, that truth belonged to the year 1878 and not to the year 1978, but the other party handling this issue, the various ideological commissions of the Provincial Committee of Kosovo, of the Central Committee of Serbia, of Montenegro, of Macedonia, were offended by our programs that dealt with the Albanian League of Prizren this way, and they attacked the Albanian League and its leaders. But practically they couldn't do anything to those leaders, so they attacked me, and from then on I was called a political enemy at the time. I noticed this [change] in instances when I would be told, "It is better if you don't move from the house and you go out only when you have to, at night."

In this regard, I can say that I experienced a relatively hard blow. Even today I am determined to tell the truth, a historical truth that belonged to me, because I was a person of science, and science does not take into consideration if someone likes something or not. It knows if something is the truth or not the truth, but the consequences of this, I would call it lynching, were difficult, not only for me, but for my family as well. We were denied, for example, I was denied the right to receive a salary, to receive wages. I received some for the very few hours, for the three hours that I worked at Faculty of Philosophy. I didn't have any other sources of income. So in this regard, I went through a pretty bad debacle.

I did not become willingly involved in the Communist Party. I got involved with the Communist Party in 1955, when I presented the initial documents to get a job, I was asked for the documentation that I was a member of the Communist Party. Then I accepted to become a member of the Communist Party. I got the certificate and attached it to the file with the other documents, university diploma etc., etc. Only then, I got the right to become a high school professor in Kosovo high schools, specifically in Gjakova, Prizren, Pristina. In the meantime, I was a supporter of the conceptualization of the cultural, educational, and scientific development of Albanians of then Yugoslavia. No one forced me, but I myself supported the concept that was given by the leadership of the Communist League of Yugoslavia at the time. And I was one of those involved in the implementation of Albanians' rights to their history, to their language, to their culture, to their economic development etc., etc.

It is important to emphasize that I was never part of the [political] organs of the Communist League of Kosovo. But the bodies of the Communist League of Kosovo always invited me for consultations, even more so for important consultations about educational, cultural and scientific events. I was not involved, I don't even know the reason myself but that did not bother me at all.

Later, I heard that one of my father's brothers who lived [in Albania] and was known in Albania as a member of Ahmet Zog's cabinet, was a sworn Zogist and he had strictly persecuted Communists at the time, Fadil Hoxha and Xhavit Nimani and Elhami Nimani and Ymer Pula etc. etc. among them. I never knew him not only because he was separated from our family, but he was much older than I, so that I didn't get to live that time. But my parents adored Zog's Kingdom, the Albanian Kingdom. They were not involved with the Communist movement, not that they rejected it, as they did not have any particular affiliation, but the truth is that they preferred Ahmet Zog over Josip Broz Tito, Ahmet Zog over Fadil Hoxha.

I think that this knowledge had an impact because they were interested in finding out about my origins, those of us who were persecuted at the time in Albania and they [found] that I belong to this family etc. etc. And I think that this was the reason that in very important meetings at the Kosovo's level but also at the Yugoslav level, in the League of Communists, I was present without a right to vote. I debated freely, in a way that those deciding took into account also the facts that I discussed. I was involved in the so-called Socialist Alliance of Working People¹⁴ of Kosovo of the time. It was previously called the People's Front, of which all the adult citizens were members, and I was there at the provincial level. But this was an organization, I don't know how to say, a massive popular organization, very similar to former and contemporary unions.

Despite all of this, I did not meet obstacles in publishing my papers, I did not meet obstacles in publishing my books. And until I resigned, I was sentenced by a special commission of the Provincial Committee of the League of Communists of the time before the expulsion from the Communist League. However, with the later developments of Milošević's arrival, I resigned from the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. My resignation went in writing to my ward, the organization of the ward where I took part as a member of that unit.

I published not only in Kosovar magazines, but also in magazines of the former republics of the Yugoslav Federation. Some of my papers were also published in foreign languages. I took part in many symposiums, roundtables, scientific conferences in Yugoslavia and abroad. But those roundtables and in those scientific gatherings had to do with the developments in education and psychology, and psychology in relation to its use for the development of schools, and the good planning of education processes. In this regard for example, I was also in Ljubljana, there was a former annual institution, the

¹⁴ The Socialist Alliance of Working People (SAWP) was a parallel structure to the party/government, which included organizations of neighborhoods, workers, professionals, women, students and youth.

Danas University. I presented papers in Dubrovnik, in Hercegovni. I was a member of the Yugoslav delegation in a UNESCO conference in Geneva. I was a member of a special delegation for research in using educational television [programs] in the educational system of the United States of America, where I spent about three months. Also...

Anita Prapashtica: Professor, when was this, during which years?

Pajazit Nushi: No, this is much later. What I am speaking of now about the US, is when I was in Belgrade in the year 1973-1974. And later, in the year 1978, I went from Kosovo as a member and leader of the Yugoslav delegation for a study visit to the Republic of China, where we spent about three weeks visiting their cultural, educational and scientific institutions. We went to various universities, various libraries in Shanghai and other places of what was then the Republic of China, particularly central China, Beijing, according to the study program. We had a very high level reception by the Chinese leadership of the time, because Yugoslavia at the time enjoyed a type of relatively powerful authority in the circles of various countries, as well as in Asian circles, which included China, and especially South Korea. But as far as I know, North Korea, currently called the Communist Korea was... had a good relationship with former Yugoslavia. So the delegation that I led was a delegation [with members] from almost every republic and Vojvodina, the other province. We had a very important trip as observers, the only reason I am mentioning this is because of the trust that was given to me at the time to be the leader of a delegation at the level of Yugoslavia to a very well known country as was the Republic of China.

At the time, I am discussing 1977-1978, at least towards me, there were no obvious differences because I was Albanian. The Serbs, the Montenegrins, the Croats, the Slovenians had reserved attitudes? On the contrary, in the circles where I was, that was very limited. They were people with distinct humanitarian greatness, which is why I can express gratitude, for example, for their behavior then, as I can say many negative things about the behavior of the same people when I resigned from political functions in Kosovo. The same people, Albanians but especially Serbs at the Kosovo level, as well as the Yugoslav level and the levels of other republics, unfairly accused me for allowing our institutions - cultural, educational, scientific, informative - to cooperate with relevant institutions in the Republic of Albania. On the other hand, I became protective of another factor, I explained the current protests as a response to low economic development, low social development etc. etc., that we had in Kosovo. And, [I also explained] that the Albanian professors of the State University of Tirana who came one time, for one week in one month - were not the cause of the protests. They can't be the cause, I always held this position and I do it even today. However, despite this, I didn't suffer from heavy political repercussions, like some of my friends.

As an engaged person and primarily interested in the development of my nation, I did not see the reason to join a political party when the Kosovo political system moved on to the multi-party system. I did not consider it reasonable to do so after paying membership fees for 34 years and five months to the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, and now I should become a member of the Social Democratic party of

Kosovo, a member of the Democratic League of Ibrahim Rugova, of the party...whichever party here. I felt that I would damage them and damage myself, for 34 years and a half I paid membership fees, but I paid to be a member of League of Communists of Yugoslavia and now...

Therefore I didn't join any political party but I got involved in the Council for the Defense of Human Rights and Freedoms (CDHRF). I was a member there since the beginning, I was one of the people involved in the founding of this Council, and I never left this Council. In the meantime, I was elected Vice-Chairman, and later I was the president of the CDHRF for more than twelve years. As the years passed, and with the arrival of new generations on the scene, I did not see the reason to get involved later in this Council.

But I have to emphasize that during...after the year 2000, in support of the work I had done, the Faculty of Philosophy, the Education and Science Council of the Faculty of Philosophy, nominated me to become a member of the Kosovo Academy of Arts and Sciences. I was selected in 2008 as a corresponding member of the Kosovo Academy of Arts and Sciences, and in 2012 I was selected as a regular member of this Academy, where I work today as well. In the meantime, they selected me also as the Vice-Chairman of the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Kosovo. Even today I perform this function.

However, I think that my experience was one of the sources or one of the criteria that did not allow me to completely leave behind some activities that have to do with the defense of human rights and freedom. In this regard, the Ministry of Defense led by the Deputy Prime Minister Hajredin Kuçi, trusted me with the position of leader of the Kosovo delegation in talks with Serbia about the issue of the missing people from Kosovo. It is the eighth year that I lead the Kosovo delegation to find information on where these people are, where were they lost, how to hand over the remains of these people to their families, to the family members who are still alive.

Unfortunately, I also had missing people from my extended family. One of my sisters is missing two sons, one 18 years old, one 19 years old. Parts of the remains of one of them have been found and the second one is missing and his fate is unknown to this day. Even today, I am coming here from a meeting that we had, an inter-ministry commission of the Kosovo Government on the issue of missing persons, because I am working on this problem. On the other hand, the same Ministry has hired me to be a senior scientific counselor for the Institute for War Crimes in Kosovo. In this institute I currently lead two projects, the project of the missing persons and the project of sexual violence against women during the time of war operations in Kosovo. Each is more difficult than the other, each is more difficult because of the very heavy consequences, but also because of lack of sources, information.

We still don't have information about where to look for 1740 bodies of missing Kosovars, mainly Albanians of course. We receive and find very little information, especially about the rape of women. It has been stressed by individuals and they have published various articles, even books about the rape of women, but they were individual books and not institutional books, because there were publications that in Kosovo there were, at times twenty thousand rapes, at times thirty thousand, at times twenty-five

thousand. We inquired as part of this project, for example we found 49 locations in all Kosovo where rapes have happened. Let's say fifty locations, in fifty locations, if there were fifty women raped, that makes 2500 women, but not twenty thousand raped women. Let's suppose that one hundred women were raped in these locations, that comes to five thousand, not thirty thousand, not twenty thousand.

However, I would say that although the number is very important, even more important is the human dimension of a dirty war, a dirty war that Kosovo experienced. The very dirty dimension is observed in the fact that women were defenseless, that they did not have the physical strength to defend, to defend themselves and defend their children, they were used for the pleasure of the Serbian army, they were used for sexual pleasure by the Serbian paramilitaries here. For example their life, based on what one of these women told me, "We are alive, among the dead." They experience their situation as dead, but they are alive.

The lives of these women are very unfortunate, but an even worse fate is that our society does not understand these processes. Many of them have gone abroad, some of them are expelled from their families, there are some who live in very great poverty, alone, in isolation etc., etc. They tried to erase this process, to hide it completely. It is not about revealing complete military and political developments, the process has to be recognized. It is difficult for the moral customs of the Albanian society to talk about the rape of women, but this has to be known because at the time the rape of women was used to subdue Albanians and their demands, this has to be known. The true proportions, it might never be known and it is difficult to know.

Regardless of that, it is enough to know that in the dirty war that developed in Kosovo, not only did people go missing, but their remains were exhumed. A part of the exhumation of their remains was transported to Serbia in unknown places. But these two dimensions of this war that was developed in Kosovo, show a very low ethical level of the war developed in Kosovo, which has been written about. But it is better that they are written by special institutions and not by individuals, because in the end they are subjective opinions of individuals, and institutions have special criteria for the verification of these events.

Having lost my job, and being left without an income after I resigned, in the meantime I applied for a job in the Office of Lexicography *Miroslav Krleža* in Zagreb, to work on the Yugoslav encyclopedia that was being prepared for publication at the time. I was accepted through a competition, I can say that at the time I had the support of the former Editor-in-Chief of the Albanian-Yugoslav Encyclopedia in Kosovo, the late Esat Mekuli, but I was also known by people working in educational and scientific circles in Croatia. So, I spent about ten years of my work life at this institution. The largest part, obviously, [I spent] within the editorial premises we had allocated in Pristina, but I was the youngest one among other members and almost every month I spent a week in Zagreb working on articles, translations, publications, etc., etc. for this Encyclopedia.

This service helped immensely in my intellectual development, and indeed it is a development tool that the environment [uses] to push you to become established. It is different to establish yourself and be

successful in Zagreb, and it is different to be resourceful in Pristina. We don't like [to hear] that, but such is the truth. When I put together the ten years I spent in Belgrade and the ten years I spent in Zagreb, neither more, nor less, they account for half of my professional life. I spent half of it in these cultural, educational, political centers and those helped me a lot... my stay in these cultural and scientific institutions of these two environments that were much more developed than the environment in Kosovo.

We managed to publish two volumes of the Yugoslav Encyclopedia in Albanian, we prepared the third volume. But the war broke out and I feel sorry that all that material we had collected, processed, the index cards, the translation..they burned them, they destroyed them and all that material is lost with the exception of the two volumes of the Yugoslav Encyclopedia¹⁵ that were published. These noted objectively the process of the very special development of Albanians of Kosovo. For example, the Encyclopedia, or to call it better the encyclopedic texts of Tirana, were published a year later than the Albanian text of the Encyclopedia in Pristina. Understandably, Sami Frashëri published his encyclopedia long before us, but he also published it in Ottoman language and not in Albanian. However, it is a very important historical notation because Sami Frashëri was not Turkish, Sami Frashëri was Albanian and the development of the encyclopedia begins with his name and not with the name of Pajazit Nushi or Esat Mekuli or someone else either in Tirana or in Pristina.

I also accepted to be the chairman of the board at Iliria University at the beginning, as this university was being established. Later I was offered to be the rector of this university. I also fulfill this position, I have a set work schedule there, I go there three times a week and I work between one and three hours there. I don't teach there, but I work on organizing the academic work and scientific research of this university. Otherwise, my place of work and my official work is the Academy of Science, my place is here, I come to work every day, we have relatively good work conditions in this Academy.

I have a few personal projects, which I offer to the Academy for publication, for example I offered the publishing of a Lexicon of Psychology for the year 2014. I am at the end of the project and I will hand it in to the Kosovo Academy of Arts and Sciences for publication. I am working on another project in psychology as well, and this project has to do with the development of the psychology of the Albanians' national thinking and with the development of psychological scientific thinking among Albanians that was handled...how spiritual phenomena were treated according to legends, according to gossip, according to the elderly, according to epic songs, according to lyrical songs, how these things were

¹⁵The *Enciklopedija Jugoslavije*, published in 1980 as a model of collaboration among historians of different nationalities, was the first public demonstration of the ethnic conflict that was brewing in Yugoslavia. Serb members of the editorial board complained after the Encyclopedia was published in Croatia, reformulated the two entries "Albanians" and "Albanian-Yugoslav Relations," and sent the new versions to subscribers asking them to add the new texts to the volume. The entry "*Albanci. Ime*" (Albanians. Name), on p. 72, is followed by page 1 of the entry "*Albanci (alb. Shqiptarët). Ime*," which continues until p. 12, to be followed by p. 73. In the first entry, the Albanians are said to descend from Illyrians, in the second they are presented as a nation born in the early Middle Ages after the long process of assimilation of Illyrians and Slavs.

treated in folklore, how they were treated in scientific thinking. This theme hasn't been researched by others, I am thinking of researching it if my life is long enough to complete this project as well.

As I mentioned earlier, I did not find it necessary to get involved in a political party of the multi-party system in Kosovo, for the reason that for the majority of my life I belonged to one party, I leave it to history to evaluate that. But I was involved from the beginning, particularly from the year, from the end of the year 1989, in the Council for the Defense of Human Rights and Freedoms. My main activity during the war in Kosovo was that during the war was happening in Kosovo and during all the fighting and difficulties that we had in the '80s and '90s and in the beginning of the 2000s, I spent them in the CDHRF. Today I think that there we did a very important job in informing the world about what was happening in Kosovo. We provided information translated in English, and we forwarded them to either homologous institutions that deal with the defense of human rights and freedoms in Vienna, in London, in Tirana, either with video recordings of murders, expulsion, of injured people, of killings of the Albanian soldiers in Yugoslav army etc. etc.

We followed these every day, we managed to expand this Council with our sub-councils throughout all Kosovo municipalities. They forwarded the information to us about what was happening in the municipality. We conveyed that information to the outside world in the ways that were possible, whether by radio, or by television, or through translations, or by sending the information to renowned centers for the defense of human rights and freedoms, but also to the federal bodies of Yugoslavia. Here I can say that truly the role of this institution, not because I was there, but at the founding we were a group of intellectuals, there was Idriz Ajeti, there was Mark Krasniqi, there was Dervish Rozhaja, there was Rexhep Qosja, there was Zeqerija Cana, there was Imer Jaka, there was Bajram Kelmendi...I can't remember the other names that founded this council. We were persecuted, we tried to defend... to defend ourselves and to defend others as much as we could. We suffered great losses in this Council, many of our activists were beaten, injured, some of them suffered the worst and were killed. For example the reason that Bajram Kelmendi was killed was exactly because of his involvement in defending human rights and freedoms. As you know, not only was he killed, but his two sons were killed as well.

The most important act that I signed on this Council was the act sent to the Court in the Hague, an act in which the group of our lawyers of the Council at the time led by Bajram Kelmendi, Hazi Bala, Lirie Osmani, Nekibe Kelmendi and some others, accused directly a very high official of Yugoslavia, then led by Milošević. All of his generals were accused, high officials of Serbia's government at the time were also accused. To tell {addresses those present} the truth, I signed that act, but immediately when I signed it, I knew that they will arrest me or persecute me, or kill me. I tried to protect my family so that it wasn't harmed, as for myself I had done it all. I had already retired, actually they forced me into retirement. I had achieved what I had achieved, these things that I could maybe achieve I wasn't ever going to achieve if they had killed me. But the threat was present in this case. Thanks to my involvement with the CDHRF even now at this age, I am still involved as I told you in the Kosovo delegation for the discovery of the missing people in talks with Serbia. Thanks to my involvement in the Council, I am involved in the

Institute for War Crimes where I lead two projects as I told you earlier. So that the involvement in the CDHRF has an influence also on my later activities.

How to say, I am not one of those who thinks that I could have worked differently. Even now I would take the path that I have taken. I don't doubt at all that it was a productive road for the environment where I worked and also for my personal development. This environment established me as a high school teacher, and as a professor in college and as a lecturer, associate professor, tenured professor at the University of Pristina, Professor at University of Tetovo, correspondent member of the Academy, regular member of the Academy. This environment established me, and I feel the need to help this environment as much as I can. Although I am a bit older, I can say that my health has served me. I will always be ready to help not only in theory, but also hands on to go and see where the massive graveyards are, to go and see the remains ... the institute of forensic psychiatry in Prihtina, to go to EULEX's institutes to see the remains of our people, and how their identification can be managed.

I went to Bosnia to see the same thing etc. etc., that is why I don't mind physical work as long as my health allows it. But intellectual work suits me better than the physical work. I have a system regarding my intellectual work, it is already established so even if I wanted to I couldn't change it. For example, I sleep only three hours at night, I work from three o'clock after midnight till seven-eight, while the others are asleep, because then I can use the library without noise, without other disturbances. So, even if I don't feel like working, three hours after midnight I can't sleep, because I am used to it, [I am used] for tens of years to wake up and work. Also, today I work in the same framework, in the same system, in various intellectual work, but work that has to do directly with my profession.

Anita Prapashtica: Tell us about your dreams as a young person.

Pajazit Nushi: My dreams? To be honest, with this I understand what was my vision for the future, how to say, in general and how I understand the future, not only mine but others' as well. I went through very complicated periods politically, militarily, economically etc. etc. And today when I perceive the current political situation, not only in Kosovo but outside of Kosovo as well, I think that we have to put more effort in maintaining peace and a balanced development of the southeastern region of Europe. I don't think that future developments will go smoothly and with ease as people would like, and as they think.

I wouldn't be able to answer the question, "What are the reasons you think this way?" I am perceiving these developments here, developments that go from one extreme to another, developments where the Parliament supports the Amnesty Law, *Vetëvendosje* mobilizes and protests against this law. What is the truth here? People need to know this. They need to know where to get involved, reaching agreements here is a very complicated process, in Kosovo it's even more complicated than in other places. Democratic development, but the democratic development does not mean insults and resentment and taking people out of the framework of discussions etc. etc. It is not only Kosovo's situation. Look at Albania, it is the same situation, at the end we are the same nation, and we can't have many different

views between us. But they are not good, they are not good, that is why my desired dream would be, for the agreements to be more rational and more productive, like in a pluralist and in a democratic system.

Anita Prapashtica: What were your dreams? And, is Kosovo as you had imagined it?

Pajazit Nushi: My first dream in youth was to become a good high school professor, to tell you the truth {addresses those present}, this was an *idée fixe*, to become a good worker, a good professional, at the levels that were known then. And the level we knew then, the highest one, was high school professor, this was the level we always dreamed of, at least my generation did. Had you asked me, I would have never said that I would become a good high school professor, because I received many thanks and how to say, various medals for all the things I did and I haven't mentioned them here. But at the time, I wouldn't believe even in my dreams that I would become a university professor or the Vice-Chairman of the Academy of Science, Allah forbid, not that!

Anita Prapashtica: What do you consider your biggest accomplishment?

Pajazit Nushi: If I objectively consider my biggest accomplishment, it would be the Deputy Chairman of the Kosovo Academy of Arts and Sciences, if you look at it objectively. This is a step that shows many things. I also have some other personal aspirations, for example I mentioned a little earlier, that for more than thirty years I have been working on creating this lexicon. In 1987, the Albanian Language Institute published my psychology dictionary. I made changes to that dictionary, [I wrote] addendums, I marked new sources where I got new materials for the lexicon. In case I manage to compile and complete this lexicon, it would be on the level with my real aspirations, because I am almost at the end, I think I can complete it. However, I would like to be able to give a clear picture of how we Albanians went from religious beliefs about the soul, up to the scientific understanding of human psychology, of psychological processes, human behavior, human temperament, human personality, human character, features in the human character etc. etc.

However, what I said that starts to disappoint me a bit, because we had a very long period where we dealt with a folk understanding of souls, dreams, the human character, honor, hospitality etc. etc. The stage or the phase of the scientific development of these occurrences was late for us, not to say very late, and it is a fact that can't be denied as one cannot deny that our people, although they were lower educationally and culturally, always inquired, researched, in whatever way they knew, "What does the dream that I had last night mean?" For example, what do you say about the phenomenon that people today have faith in someone in this grave, someone in a *turbe*,¹⁶ someone in a church, someone in this person etc. etc.? Our people wondered about this phenomenon, and the thing that should be emphasized in this case is that among the uneducated, very neglected people from Kosovo, there are some older people who are very smart, very clever, so that the history of the development of the Albanian thought has marked them. There are such smart people who solved very complex family, interpersonal, inter-tribal matters, that

¹⁶ Ottoman tomb.

today even doctors of jurisprudence would not be able to solve them so easily. Property issues, disagreements about property were very difficult in Kosovo.

In large families, for example in a case of divorce, it is difficult to find an objective criterion there, because, “I think this way, you think that way.” However, our people knew how to resolve these [issues] with great success, with great of success. For example, I knew some from the literature, not that I had the opportunity to meet them, they said one Binak Alia wisely resolved the most complicated murders among people. He resolved them in that way by protecting people to stop them from killing each other, that is the main goal, and not punishment, “You did this and you have to be sentenced to death.” Anyone can do this, but to assess fault in a humane way and determine the wrong that each has committed while protecting his human dignity and while defending his being, that is not a small task. It wasn’t only Binak Alia, there were a few from our Drenica that resolved these problems with a lot more success than how we resolve things today, including myself here as well.

It means that they had very smart people, indeed they didn’t know how to read or write but they knew very well how to think. Their [kind of] thinking didn’t know symbols, did not know how to write numbers, did not know the letters, but they knew the essence of the problem and how to solve that problem. Even today we have such people, but today we have such people who develop their thinking and their intellect through symbols, through a different system.

For example, I am the Chairman of a board for a project for children of extraordinary intelligence in Kosovo, this project has been implemented for two years. Those children, when you speak to them, I, myself, have to be very careful because they are able to get the problem right away. Children of extraordinary intelligence! For example, they don’t know how to draw, but they are able to develop a system of math problems ... professors at Pristina University. I want to say that our environment has this category as well, a category that I hope that our institutions will engage more and more with, because the individual development of these children when they grow up, they will be true leaders of a country. The country was never led by people who weren’t above average intelligence, much less of average intelligence. The country was led well and with success by those who were extraordinarily intelligent, had a strong intellect etc. etc.